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ABSTRACT

Designed for use with a full class but adaptable for individual or small-group instruction, this paper presents teachers with brief suggestions for extending the Read-a-Thon stories beyond discussing and/or writing answers to the questions at the end of the stories. Activities described in the paper include: (1) reading activities (such as "Password" and "20 Questions"); (2) listening and oral sharing activities (including "Tape Centers" and "Storytellers"); (3) art, drama and music activities (such as "Picture Sequences," "Framed Stories," and "Raps and Tunes"); (4) writing activities (such as "Points of View," "Poems and More Poems," and "Word Graffiti"); (5) health and safety activities (including "Say No" and "Futuring"); and (6) social studies activities (such as "Location Clues" and "Stereotypes"). (RS)

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KIDS HELPING KIDS KOSAIR READ-A-THON

Suggestions for Teachers and Parents

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KIDS HELPING KIDS KOSAIR READ-A-THON

Suggestions for Teachers and Parents

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The following are brief suggestions for extending the Read-a-thon stories beyond discussing and/or writing answers to the questions at the end of the stories. As written here, the activities are designed for teachers working with a full class, but parents can easily adapt the ideas for one child or for a small group of children.

Reading Activities:

1. FIND-A-MATCH--Discuss commonly known books, stories and rhymes for children and young adults which are similar in some way to the characters and plot of the KOSAIR stories. Search for other examples of literature that are related in some way to topics in the KOSAIR booklets. (Many of these will be classified as bibliotherapy).

2. PASSWORD--Select unusual words from the stories to be given as passwords to enter the room or to earn special privileges. Definitions or sentences using the words may be required also. Post a cumulative list of words for frequent reference and review.

3. TWENTY QUESTIONS--Near the completion of the KOSAIR Project, when most students have read all of the stories, write selected characters' names on slips of paper. Place the slips in a box from which each student will draw and read a name. The rest of the class may be challenged to determine who the character is by asking appropriate questions in Twenty-Question style. The leader may wish to limit the number of questions to match the students' attention span.

4. THINK-ALOUD MODEL--This is a technique whereby the teacher (parent) orally predicts, reflects and questions as he/she reads. The process of modeling "Think Aloud" will aid young readers in becoming aware of strategies they can employ to become more active as readers.

5. PEER READING--To encourage more reading, arrange pairs from among students in the class or from older and younger age groups. The pairs read and discuss a story for a designated period of time and then join another pair for extended discussion.

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Listening and Oral Sharing Activities:

1. TAPE CENTERS--As students become involved in the Read-a-thon Project, ask volunteers to read stories aloud into a tape recorder. Place the tapes in a listening center with a list of questions for small group discussions. Less able readers may be motivated to follow and listen to taped stories.

2. LISTEN AND READ--Each day during the project, read aloud a brief segment from a selected story. STOP at an exciting point as motivation for students to finish reading on their own. They may become even more motivated by making predictions about the endings, by reading to confirm who can best second-guess the author and by discussing which endings were more exciting than the real ones.

3. STORYTELLERS--Invite senior citizens to tell stories relating their experiences of long ago to some of the KOSAIR topics.

4. ENDINGS! ENDINGS!--In small groups assign stories to be read orally. Follow by having each group make up several different endings for each of the stories.

5. WHO AM I?--Play "Name-My-Character" by having students orally share clues about mystery characters--human or animal--described in the story booklets.

Art, Drama and Music Activities:

1. PICTURE SEQUENCES--Ask students to draw, color or paint scenes from their favorite stories. When all have finished, guide them in grouping the visuals by stories and then in sequencing the pictures to follow events in the story. Captions may be added to develop concise writing skills.

2. MONOCHROMATICS--Following the reading of the stories, ask each student to select one that has a very special mood--happy, sad, exciting, mysterious--and to COLOR-THE-STORY by using a single crayon or paint color to make a MONOCHROMATIC. Compare and discuss the colors used to represent moods. Following this exercise, read Mary O'Neill's Hailstones and Hallibut Bones--Adventures in Color (New York: Doubleday, 1989) for wonderful color poems written as similes.

3. FRAMED STORIES--Using large art paper, ask students to fold the paper into at least three panels and to draw and color a major event from the story on each of the STORY FRAMES. Each frame may be captioned with a capsule sentence.

4. DESIGNER CARDS--Many of the KOSAIR stories deal with sadness, illness, death and special triumphs. Ask each student to select a favorite character and to design an appropriate cheer, get-well, sympathy or congratulatory card. Upon presentation of each product, encourage the class to guess which character will receive the designer's card.

5. MOBILE--Initiate the construction of a story mobile by giving each student six cards and a string. The student then selects a story and writes responses to card titles of the major "who," "what," "when," "where," "why" and "how" from the storyline. The cards may be illustrated for added interest. After attaching the cards with string in pyramid style, the designer can suspend his/her mobile for sharing and review.

6. RAPS AND TUNES--Select stories that have strong themes. Encourage students to compose their own raps or to set words from the story to familiar tunes.

7. MIXED-UP-CHARACTERS--Write the names of all of the characters from the completed KOSAIR booklet on slips of paper. Encourage students to randomly draw or to choose character slips and then to participate in impromptu role playing of a brief "Story Meeting" of varied combinations of characters. Challenge the role players to act out viable solutions to characters' problems.

8. STORYBOARDS--Prior to reading a story, give students instructions on the format and use of a storyboard. Present them with a skeleton outline with column labels as follows: "Scene," "Setting," "Characters," "Action" and "Props." During the reading process, students fill in key words for each major scene in the story and later use the storyboard as a guide for writing a scripted play, for an impromptu rehearsal or simply for retelling the story.

<u>Writing Activities:</u>

1. POINTS OF VIEW--Practice seeing situations from other points of view by having students re-write or tell selected stories from different characters' points of view or from personal views.

2. LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE--Involve young children in creating a language experience story from a favorite story read aloud by the teacher. Write the story in the children's own words as they retell it or simply give an overview. As an extension of this writing and thinking process, involve children in composing a list of questions for the new version.

3. PATIENT PEN PALS--Plan a visit to a hospital or nursing home. (Kosair Children's Hospital has wonderful tours for children.) During the hospital or home visit, investigate possibilities for "adopting" several patients who would like to be pen pals with the class. Set up individual or writing teams from the class who will continue to correspond even when no responses come from the adopted patient.

4. POEMS AND MORE POEMS--Write and illustrate poems based upon themes from booklet stories. Use unusual poem formats such as diamonte (diamond-shaped) which well suits many of the contrasts found in the stories: 1st line--one word title; 2nd line--2 adjectives describing title; 3rd line--3 action or "ing" words; 4th line--2 nouns renaming the title and 2 nouns which are opposite the title; 5th line--3 opposite-type "ing" words; 6th line--2 adjectives which describe the opposite-meaning title on the 7th line.

5. FIRST-CLASS-AUTHORS--The KOSAIR stories were written by real teachers and students about personal experiences. Engage students in writing their own stories for other classes in the school. The writing experience can be made very effective by having editing partners critique the stories prior to the public sharing.

6. PRETEND JOURNALS--Ask students to pretend they are selected characters from the stories. They then create journal entries for one week that describe the characters' feelings and actions.

7. THE SHORT AND LONG OF IT--Select sentences from a story. Ask pupils to combine and/or expand the sentences in as many ways as possible. Individual words or short phrases printed on separate slips of paper may make the task more imaginative and certainly more manipulative.

8. DRIED-OUT STORIES--Have students eliminate unnecessary words and details from a story. When it is to the bare bones, pretend that the story is to become a newspaper article in a limited space. Rewrite the story using who, what, when and where questions as writing guides.

9. TELEGRAM--Ask students to write telegrams for selected stories. The telegrams must communicate in very concise language the main ideas of the stories. Remind students that each word costs money!

10. CAUSE-EFFECT CHAINS--Search stories for causes of events and feelings and effects of each. Write and ilustrate to visually link cause to effect though drawings or three-dimensional chain sculptures. Infer causes and/or effects which were not described in the stories but which probably happened. Compare products to see which students can make the longest continuous cause-effect-cause chains.

11. WORD GRAFFITI--Place a large sheet of paper on a blank wall and section it off into blocks or categories. Label each with a category under which words can be classified. Examples might be "Color Words," "Mood Words," "Action Words", etc. As students read the KOSAIR stories, invite them to list key words. Later use the graffiti wall to match words to stories and to write additional stories.

Health and Safety Activities:

1. SAY NO--Identify stories which might have had different endings if the characters had said, "No!" Rewrite the endings. Discuss why it is hard to say "No" at times and how one can make "No" decisions stick.

2. HAZARD PLANS--Many of the KOSAIR stories relate to emergencies, accidents and hazards. Identify these stories and map out preventive plans for each. Instruct each student to adapt and adopt a plan for personal situations.

3. FUTURING--Extend some of the stories into the future. As a result of actions in the stories, consider what the future is most likely to be and how it might be changed for given characters.

4. RESEARCH--Identify unusual diseases and illnesses found in the stories. Assign topics for research and sharing.

5. SOLUTIONS--Use some of the discussions from the two preceding activities to predict needed solutions and inventions and a timeframe for the developments. Discuss positive and negative effects of each and then explore the possibility of future contributions of class members based on current talents and traits.

Social Studies Activities:

1. LOCATION CLUES--If the exact setting of a story is not identified, guide students in searching for clues that will limit the location to regional areas. Clues might include details of "Clothing," "Climate," "Shelter," "Vegetation," etc.

2. WHAT TIME IS IT?--Challenge students in searching for clues which will place stories and characters in time or age periods--"Long Ago," "My Life Time," "Now," "Future," or "Babies," "My Age," "Teenager," "Adult," "Older Adult," etc.

3. STEREOTYPES--Conduct a role search throughout the stories. Look for role types such as community helpers. Determine if they are traditional or nontraditional roles and if the performances presented in the stories follow expected patterns.

4. DECISION TREES--Draw an outline of a tree. On the roots identify a problem faced by a story character(s). At the top of the tree, write the desired solution or achievement goal. On branches drawn between, brainstorm all possible alternative actions, followed by consequences of each. From the alternatives and consequences, discuss and select the best branch for reaching the desired goal. Compare with the story as written.

5. WHAT IF/THEN--Discuss key actions and results of events from selected stories. Change the context of the stories by posing, "But what if . . . , then . . ." questions throughout the stories to emphasize cause-effect relations.

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